



# THE 2007 YEAR IN REVIEW

## MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF STATE



Returned to office by voters after a very productive first term, Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land continued the Department of State's successful course in 2007, using innovation and technology to deliver excellent customer service to millions of Michigan residents.

As in years past, Land focused the department on meeting budgetary challenges by striving for efficiency in all that it does. A second phase of her Branch Office Modernization Program began this year that involved the consolidation of some offices. As a result, more people are enjoying the convenience of SUPER!Centers and PLUS offices—facilities that offer enhanced services such as expanded hours, Self-Service Stations and instant titles. This and other efforts have ensured the department gets the most out of every tax dollar.

*"We think the secretary of state has done her homework and made decisions that are in the long-term best interests of her customers."*

*Battle Creek Enquirer  
editorial;  
June 20, 2007*

*"Land's methods have been efficient and cost-effective. Other state government departments and officials need to use her as an example."*

*The Macomb Daily  
editorial;  
July 5, 2007*

*"Secretary of State office committed to customer service"*

*The Michigan  
Chronicle;  
May 23-29, 2007*

In 2007, Land and her staff enacted several changes that will benefit residents well into the future. Among other things, the department oversaw the smooth implementation of the state's voter ID law, which strengthened the integrity of Michigan's elections system. It also introduced driver education improvements to make young drivers safer and a special heart sticker for driver licenses that will help save more lives through organ donation.

With three years left in her second term, Land has many ambitious ideas still on her agenda. Working with partners at the local, state and federal levels, she and her team will pursue every opportunity to provide even more cost-effective, prudent and convenient services to the department's customers.

### ENHANCING CUSTOMER SERVICE

At the Department of State, providing the best possible customer service is the highest priority. This means making transactions quick and easy. It also means listening to our customers and giving them the options they want.

■ **Modernizing for you:** Land launched the second phase of her successful Branch Office Modernization Program, consolidating some traditional offices while opening a SUPER!Center in Oakland County and seven PLUS offices statewide. These facilities provide enhanced services such as expanded hours, instant titles and the ability to purchase your own driving record.

■ **Call us for free:** Calling the Department of State has never been easier! By dialing the toll-free number 1-888-SOS-MICH (1-888-767-6424), you will reach the Department of State Information Center, the one-stop source for answers to any questions about the department's services and programs. Information Center specialists also handle calls on behalf of branch offices, allowing branch employees to focus on on-site customers.



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*"Ms. Land's office is the one place people are most likely to come into contact with their state government. She has kept that connection in mind by focusing on citizen needs."*

*The Grand Rapids  
Press editorial;  
Jan. 8, 2007*

*"Secretary of State expands service"*

*The (Escanaba) Daily  
Press;  
July 25, 2007*

*"The Secretary of State has launched a pilot program that will allow companies to receive special license plates so they don't have to go through the hassle of putting new registration tabs on every vehicle each year."*

*Michigan Information  
& Research Service;  
Oct. 3, 2007*

■ **Same great service:** The Department of State recorded 400,000 more transactions at its branch offices than last year. Despite the significantly higher demand, department employees kept on top of it all, delivering the same great service as always. They capably met every challenge-including a surge of traffic as a potential state government shutdown approached.

■ **Traveling office:** The Secretary of State Mobile Branch Office traveled more than 7,700 miles across Michigan in 2007, totaling over 4,500 transactions and bringing the convenience of department services to many communities, college campuses and special events.

■ **The SOS booth:** Department staff provided helpful services and information to thousands of residents at several popular events this year, including the North American International Auto Show, the Detroit Boat Show, the State Fair in Detroit and the Upper Peninsula State Fair in Escanaba. The Secretary of State booth offered vehicle, voter and organ donor registration, among other things.

■ **Self-Service customers up 50%:** Self-Service Stations, loved by customers for their ability to dispense vehicle tabs in minutes and 24/7 availability in most locations, continue to be very popular. Several new machines were added across the state and the number of transactions recorded since the "Scan. Pay. Go!" program began in 2005 surpassed 165,000. Between fiscal years 2006 and 2007, the number of people using Self-Service Stations climbed by more than 50 percent.

■ **MIFleet launched!** Finding yet another way to improve customers' convenience and reduce branch office traffic, the department launched the MIFleet pilot program with Consumers Energy for approximately 1,800 vehicles. The program involves the issuance of special fleet license plates that save companies the trouble of putting new registration tabs on hundreds of vehicles each year. Plans for statewide implementation are under development.



■ **Convenient certification:** Document certification was expanded from three locations to all SUPER!Centers and the Marquette County PLUS Office. Now, more people, especially those seeking to adopt a child from a foreign country, can enjoy walk-in access to the service and complete their paperwork faster.

■ **Plate Fee Calculator:** Here to help auto dealers, the Department of State introduced a Plate Fee Calculator on its Web site to make vehicle purchases easier. The tool eliminates manually computing license plate fees and plate expiration dates, which was often a labor-intensive and time-consuming task for dealers.



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*"While buying a new car can be exciting, it can also be time consuming when it comes to purchasing new license plates and registration. But do you know that the Michigan Secretary of State offers a program that allows car buyers to get their plates and registration right at the dealership?"*

*Tom Greenwood  
Commuting columnist,  
The Detroit News;  
Sept. 25, 2007*

*"Secretary of state leads the way on streamlining"*

*The Oakland Press;  
July 3, 2007*

*"Michigan Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land is making significant changes to her branch offices over the next couple of years, a move that could serve as a model for all state government."*

*The Macomb Daily  
editorial;  
July 5, 2007*

■ **Mechanic exams:** Department staff once again took advantage of a unique opportunity to administer the mechanic certification exam at the Annual Automotive Service Exposition in Lansing. This year, 267 exams were given in one day, which equaled a month's worth of testing at the 74 Secretary of State offices that provide mechanic testing.

■ **Records for you:** More and more customers are taking advantage of the enhanced services SUPER!Centers and PLUS offices offer, such as the ability to purchase a copy of your driving record. There were nearly 44,000 driving record sales by the department in fiscal year 2007—4,500 more than in fiscal year 2006.

■ **No wait for plates!** More than 175,000 transactions were recorded in the timesaving Dealer Direct Program, which allows customers to purchase plates and tabs when buying a new car at participating dealerships rather than waiting to receive them in the mail. The number of dealers in the program jumped from 54 in 2006 to 279 in 2007, an increase of 416 percent.

### SAVING MONEY, SPENDING SMARTLY

Despite tighter fiscal constraints each year, Secretary Land has balanced the department's budget without sacrificing service. She makes the tough decisions, and the smart decisions, that make the most out of every tax dollar.

■ **Financially fit:** The Department of State was given a clean bill of financial health by the state's Office of the Auditor General, which issued a report that had no audit findings.

■ **Going paperless:** In a move that is expected to save the Bureau of Elections more than \$100,000, campaign finance manuals and forms are now provided on CD rather than paper.

■ **Faster data, fewer dollars:** Smart decisions can save money without sacrificing efficiency. An example of this is the department's installation of high-speed cable rather than conventional data lines in branch offices, which provide faster processing and annual savings of \$30,000.

■ **Earlier finish saves \$\$:** The Assigned Claims Facility's annual assessment was completed three weeks earlier than the prior year, saving over \$378,000 in interest payments to the servicing insurers, which benefits auto insurance policy holders. The State of Michigan established the Assigned Claims Plan in 1973 to provide financial help to people injured in an uninsured motor vehicle accident, who have no insurance coverage of their own.



# Michigan Department of State

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*"...Land, in her quiet and non-confrontational way, has done a good job of targeting limited resources to regional services, while emphasizing technology and growth of online services..."*

*George Weeks  
syndicated columnist;  
June 17, 2007*

*"Michigan Secretary of State offices to link by video for training, public information"*

*Public CIO magazine;  
Feb. 2, 2007*

*"Land is instituting some high-tech changes that should make many basic secretary of state services easier to receive, even with fewer offices in operation."*

*The Macomb Daily  
editorial;  
July 5, 2007*

*"Let's praise the secretary of state. And let's not let her good work go unnoticed."*

*Jackson Citizen Patriot  
editorial;  
Oct. 31, 2007*

### HARNESSING THE POWER OF TECHNOLOGY

Under Secretary Land's leadership, the department is constantly working to offer more automated and online services, so customers can do business whenever it is convenient for them—even after hours and from home. Wherever possible, technology is used to offer a higher level of service to customers.

■ **Communicating with customers:** A cutting-edge video network was installed in 108 branch offices as part of a partnership with Digital 10 Network. The system includes large-screen plasma monitors which provide key state government information to thousands of customers each week and allows the department to communicate with branch employees. Digital 10 pays for the equipment and network maintenance under a competitively bid five-year state contract.

■ **Online renewals soar 230%:** Renewing vehicle and boat registrations over the Internet from home, work or elsewhere continues to be a favorite option for customers. In fiscal year 2007, the number of Web renewals increased by 55,000 from 2006. From fiscal years 2003 to 2007, online renewals have jumped 230 percent.

■ **E-mail not mail:** Once again employing the convenience and speed of the Internet, the department switched to broadcast e-mails for providing important information to dealers, repair facility employees and mechanics rather than mailing the materials. The new approach will save the state thousands of dollars in printing and postage.

■ **Out with Blue, in with new!** On Jan. 1, Michigan began moving full-speed ahead toward a standard license plate with modern reflective technology and away from the Old Blue plate, an upgrade that will help law enforcement keep our streets safe. During the first nine months of 2007, more than 4 million new standard plates and over 740,000 Spectacular Peninsulas plates were issued.



■ **Online UCC is a hit!** Two of every three Uniform Commercial Code transactions the department records—67 percent—are now completed online, saving mounds of paperwork. There were nearly 180,000 UCC transactions in fiscal year 2007, up 27 percent from the year before. Businesses using the Web application include banks, law firms and federal farm service agencies.

■ **CDL testing kiosks:** Thanks to an award of federal grant money from the U.S. Department of Transportation, the department began installing 105 kiosks in 28 branch offices for the automated testing of individuals seeking a Commercial Driver License (CDL). The new approach allows scrambling of test questions to deter fraud and provides faster grading. A successful pilot of the kiosks last year led to the statewide expansion of the program, with the machines going to SUPER!Centers, PLUS offices and branch offices that have a high volume of CDL transactions.



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*"During her tenure, Land has focused many of her efforts on helping the election process operate more efficiently."*

*Battle Creek Enquirer  
editorial;  
Sept. 19, 2007*

*"We hope the Legislature and governor will act on a number of Land's proposals in the coming year."*

*Kalamazoo Gazette  
editorial;  
Feb. 12, 2007*

*"...Land, Michigan's chief election officer, in her continual drive to be efficient and fair to the public, has established certain procedures intended to make sure all qualified voters get to cast ballots."*

*The Oakland Press  
editorial;  
Oct. 30, 2007*

■ **Organ donation advances:** Promoting organ donation to help save lives is a top priority for Land. This year, the department overhauled its organ donor Web site, [www.Michigan.gov/organdonation](http://www.Michigan.gov/organdonation), to make it even easier to sign up to be an organ donor. Improvements included increasing the depth and scope of the online educational materials, streamlining the information needed to enroll and enhancing recordkeeping processes.

### STRENGTHENING THE ELECTIONS SYSTEM

Encouraging voter turnout and conducting Michigan elections in a fair and efficient manner are essential goals of Secretary Land's. The department's Bureau of Elections works closely with local and federal officials to ensure access for all voters at the polls, to smoothly implement changes in the law and to maintain the state's elections system as one of the strongest in the nation.

■ **Successful voter ID implementation:** When the Michigan Supreme Court declared the state's voter ID law constitutional and reasonable, Land and her team worked hard to inform citizens of the change and to successfully implement it. The new requirement adds another layer of protection against fraud and ensures the integrity of elections. Its first application went very smoothly in the November elections.

■ **New voter sign-ups:** The Department of State hit the road to find new voters in 2007. Staff attending naturalization events in different cities helped more than 1,700 new citizens register to vote. The Mobile Branch Office also registered more than 500 new voters on college campuses and at other locations around the state.

■ **Among the best in campaign disclosure!** Land's focus on campaign finance reform earned Michigan recognition as having one of the strongest campaign disclosure systems in the nation. The state ranked sixth among all states, according to Grading State Disclosure, a survey conducted by the Center for Governmental Studies and other organizations. Michigan's grade improved to a "B" this year, up from the "B minus" in 2005, the last year the study was done.

■ **Online QVF access:** Bringing helpful innovation to the local level, Bureau of Elections staff developed a new version of the Qualified Voter File (QVF) software that allows clerks of smaller jurisdictions to directly access QVF records online rather than having to obtain the information from the county clerk's office.

■ **Quality training:** Bureau of Elections staff kept local election officials up to date and at the forefront of administering elections through various training sessions throughout the year.



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*"Land has done a stellar job of simplifying, as much as possible, the new voter ID regulation and again has demonstrated her unique organizational skills and constant efforts to serve the public."*

*The Macomb Daily  
editorial;  
Oct. 30, 2007*

*"Land's proposals make sense, no matter which party you belong to or support."*

*The Oakland Press  
editorial;  
Feb. 19, 2007*

*"New training program will result in better young drivers"*

*The (St. Ignace)  
Evening News;  
Oct. 23, 2007*

*"Michigan's dramatic success turning out safer young drivers has made it the national leader in this area."*

*Detroit Free Press  
editorial;  
Sept. 13, 2007*

■ **Preventing election fraud:** In another effort to discourage election fraud, the Department of State completed the digitized signature project, which integrated 6.8 million signatures into the QVF to provide expedited and more accurate verification for local election officials. This new safeguard is especially helpful in the processing of absentee ballots.

■ **Access for all:** Continuing its dedication to ensure that all voters who wish to vote at the polls can do so, the department awarded more Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds to help improve local polling place access. The federal funds paid for facility entrance modifications and other improvements to accommodate voters with disabilities.

■ **Ensuring smooth elections:** Department staff produced training videos for the AutoMARK voting system, which allows individuals with disabilities to vote independently and in private. Further efforts to make Michigan's elections system the best it can be included programming upgrades and ballot testing for jurisdictions.

### STRIVING TO ENSURE SAFETY

Secretary Land marshals the resources of the Department of State to promote the safety of citizens in many areas. Through initiatives and partnerships with other organizations, the department works to inform Michigan families of the latest public and traffic safety initiatives to keep them safe.



■ **New driver's ed curriculum:** Making Michigan's roads safer is an important part of Land's agenda. This year, the department implemented a model curriculum for students and instructors, and made other changes to the state's driver education program that will save lives. For her efforts to improve driver education, Land was presented with a Distinguished Service Award by the Michigan Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association.

■ **Teen fatal crashes down 36%:** Thanks in part to department traffic safety efforts, encouraging statistics announced this year showed a decrease in the number of 16- and 17-year-olds involved in fatal accidents in Michigan. The number dropped from 80 in 2004 to 51 in 2006, a decrease of 36 percent.

■ **Dual-purpose border pass:** Land met with U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and other federal officials and moved Michigan closer to a pilot project that would implement her proposal of a dual-purpose border pass. Land's plan combines the requirements of a driver's license and a passport for the convenience of travelers.



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*"Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land is fighting for a combination driver's license/passport that will allow travelers to move more easily between North American countries without having to endure the expense and trouble of getting a passport."*

*The Detroit News  
editorial;  
March 26, 2007*

*"Terri Lynn Land's proposal is making more sense every day."*

*The (Port Huron)  
Times Herald  
editorial;  
June 21, 2007*

*"Michigan Secretary of State (Terri Lynn Land) is on a mission to help save the lives of hundreds of Michigan motorcycle riders this year."*

*Sturgis Journal  
editorial;  
May 30, 2007*

*"Land urges boaters to keep eyes open"*

*Cheboygan Daily  
Tribune;  
March 16, 2007*

Land also worked with legislators from both parties in Lansing to introduce two bill packages addressing the need for more technologically sophisticated driver's licenses. One deals with upgrading Michigan's "standard" driver's license and the other creates an optional "enhanced" driver's license that is suitable for border crossing under the federal Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI). The plan ensures the integrity of state-issued licenses and helps to secure America's borders while protecting the cross-border trade that is so important to Michigan's economy.

■ **Thwarting auto theft:** The department redesigned the official state TR-9 form used to submit vehicles to a scrap metal processor, which criminals had been misusing to sell stolen vehicles. The new form has security features including a tracking number and shading that makes the word "VOID" visible if the form is copied.

■ **CarFit campaign:** The Department of State teamed with AAA Michigan to promote CarFit, a traffic safety campaign offered at no cost to state residents. CarFit events were held at locations across the state to educate mature drivers on how to properly adjust their vehicle's controls, mirrors, seats and other components for their height and size.



■ **Toward motorcycle safety:** Motorcycle safety remains a key goal for Land, and the department demonstrated this in 2007 by purchasing 24 additional training motorcycles with grant money, revising motorcycle knowledge tests and expanding the number of motorcycle training providers in the state to 31, up from 19 in 2004.

■ **America's Waterway Watch:** Doing its part to protect Michigan's many miles of coastline, the department continued to enlist citizens to keep an eye on the state's waterways by reporting suspicious activity as part of the America's Waterway Watch campaign. The campaign is a partnership with the United States Coast Guard.

■ **The power of partnerships:** The Michigan Pharmacists Association honored Land with its Executive Board Medal in recognition of her successful partnership with the organization in cautioning the public against drowsy driving. Since taking office, Land has used the power of partnerships to educate residents on safety issues.

■ **ID training for branch employees:** The Department of State is committed to stopping identity thieves. To help branch office employees maintain a level of expertise with regard to identification documents and processing requirements, the department provided individualized ID training.



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## HELPING COMMUNITIES SUCCEED

*"Show your heart.  
That's what Secretary  
of State Terri Lynn  
Land is asking  
Michigan residents to  
do by signing up to be  
organ and tissue  
donors during Buddy  
Week..."*

*Huron Daily Tribune;  
April 9, 2007*

*"...Land and other  
leading organ donor  
advocates urge  
everyone to sign up for  
the Michigan Organ  
Donor Registry,  
bringing hope to the  
more than 3,100  
residents awaiting  
lifesaving  
transplants."*

*The Michigan Front  
Page;  
April 13, 2007*

*"Land was also  
lauded for her role in  
selecting and  
promoting new voting  
equipment for the  
disabled community."*

*The Novi News;  
Feb. 8, 2007*

The Department of State serves every resident of Michigan and Secretary Land is committed to working at the community level on projects that benefit the quality of life in our state.

■ **Heart stickers help organ donation:** Land strives to find new ways to improve the state's organ donation process. In January, the department launched its "Show Us Your Heart" campaign, which provides everyone who enrolls on the Michigan Organ Donor Registry with a heart sticker for their driver's license or state identification card. Signing up to be an organ donor has never been easier. You can enroll using the department's newly upgraded organ donor site at [www.Michigan.gov/organdonation](http://www.Michigan.gov/organdonation), or at any Secretary of State office.



■ **Serving those with disabilities:** The Michigan Paralyzed Veterans of America organization honored Land as its "Public Servant of the Year" in recognition of her work on behalf of people with disabilities. Her achievements include implementing new voting machines that allow members of the disability community to participate equally in elections.

■ **Removing abandoned vehicles:** This year, Michigan recorded the 200,000<sup>th</sup> abandoned vehicle cleared from roads and communities under the Abandoned Vehicle Law, which Land championed.

■ **Bringing NASS to Michigan:** Promoting Michigan's greatness as a travel destination, Land secured a commitment from the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) to hold the organization's summer conference in Grand Rapids from July 24-28, 2008, elevating the area to national prominence. Land also was named to the NASS executive board for 2007-08.



■ **Promoting reading to kids:** In March, Land visited elementary schools and read to students, marking the observance of National Reading Month by sharing the importance of literacy in schoolwork and in life.

■ **Helping children:** Land unveiled the department's newly redesigned Children's Trust Fund fundraising license plate, which portrays the Upper and Lower peninsulas as green imprints of a child's hands. Sales and renewals of CTF plates have generated nearly \$6 million for the Trust Fund since 2001.



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*"The Department of State is working with the cities of Detroit, Hamtramck and Highland Park to publicize the need for volunteers to patrol city neighborhoods the nights of October 29 and 30."*

*Gongwer News  
Service;  
Oct. 24, 2007*

*"Secretary of State branches statewide will be collecting nonperishable foods to help families in need."*

*Matt Helms  
commuting columnist  
Detroit Free Press;  
Sept. 17, 2007*

■ **Assisting homeless veterans:** As part of a special event, the Mobile Branch Office made a two-day visit to Warren to assist homeless veterans, primarily in obtaining identification cards that are needed to access state and federal resources.

■ **Angels' Night assistance:** Branch offices in Detroit, Hamtramck and Highland Park continued their support of the annual Angels' Night campaign by promoting the need for volunteers who patrol Detroit streets, turn on porch lights and keep an eye on neighborhoods to protect the city during Halloween. The department has assisted the city in promoting Angels' Night throughout Land's tenure.



■ **Harvest Gathering help:** The department again was a major partner in the state's annual Harvest Gathering effort, collecting food and financial donations at branch offices for needy families in Michigan. In her personal holiday card that she sends out to many family members, friends and supporters, Land invited recipients to consider helping needy families through a donation to Harvest Gathering.